

had noticed that there were wild onions, choke-cherries and other wild fruits growing in the mountains close by, which was encouraging to him.

From Ft. Bridger there was no river to follow. Clouds of dust hung over the herd as it moved, and cattle bellowed for water. Joseph was now following the trail of the Donner Party of 1846, and he couldn't help but think of the terrible tragedy that befell them when half of their party froze to death in the mountains, and he urged everyone to move faster so they could cross the mountains before snow fell. They reached the head of Echo Canyon early in September where they encountered heavy brush and a narrow, muddy creek, difficult to get wagons across, and it had to be crossed every few miles. Unknown to Joseph then, one day he would be called upon to defend that canyon against the United States Army.

Just inside Echo Canyon they passed Cache Cave, a strange, large hollow rock where Mountain Men had carved their names in years long gone. The mountains seemed to close in so as to leave hardly room for a trail, forcing them to string their stock out for miles. They couldn't bunch the herd again until they left the canyon at the Weber River. The country was easier to get through once the river was reached, and they had little trouble until they came to Salt Springs, now the site of Henefer, where they turned up Bauchmin's Creek, now East Canyon Creek, to Pratt's Pass and Big Mountain. They had to cross Bauchmin's Creek 13 times in 8 miles, in a jungle of thick willows and heavy mud, through clouds of vicious mosquitoes. Sally was exhausted and only her faith that the valley and the end of the trail was near at hand kept her going.

Joseph and his herders had to push their wagons over Pratt's Pass at Big Mountain, where they got their first view of the promised valley and the Great Salt Lake glistening in the sunset beyond. It was a sight they had dreamed of for months, and each knelt to offer a prayer of thanks. Their long ordeal was nearly over, and the following day they half slid and fell down the near vertical slopes of Big Mountain to the low pass over Little Mountain and into Emigration Canyon and into the valley of the Great Salt Lake, united in hardship and poverty but anxious to meet their friends and brethren of Nauvoo once more.<sup>9</sup> The

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9. Diary of Sally Stacy Murdock, in possession of Paul Murdock, SLC, states the Murdocks entered the valley in August, not September

Spencer-Eldredge party which followed them arrived at the valley on September 22nd, 1847, re-uniting Joseph and his small band with the First Emigration Party.

The trail from Nauvoo had been a long one, more than 1,000 miles by wagon road and half that far again by cattle trail. Although starkly beautiful, the valley was a foreboding place, for it contained not a single green tree or shrub, and already snow had whitened the mountain peaks. At her first view of the valley, Harriot Dow Young, who arrived with Brigham Young and the Advance Party had said, "*We have come 1,500 miles to get here, but I would gladly travel another 1,000 miles rather than live in such a forsaken place as this.*"<sup>10</sup> On January 8th, 1836 during the persecutions at Kirtland, Joseph Smith had reassured Brigham Young's brother Lorenzo Young, husband of Harriot Dow Young, while he was suffering from consumption that "*One day he would be safe from the mobs and would live to a ripe old age among the Saints in the Rocky Mountains.*" Now as the Prophet had promised, he had reached a safe haven in the heart of the Rockies, but at first glance it was far less than he had hoped for, and he later said, "*Not a green thing was in sight, and the ground was covered with millions of black crickets.*"<sup>11</sup> But Joseph, like Brigham before him, recognized the valley as the place Joseph Smith had seen in vision and had described to them. It was enough.